

REV. STAN. J. HARRIS.

POB 71561 Charleston, S.C. 29405; (803) 763-0321
March 4th 1982



Dear Everybody;

This is going to be one of those tacky form-type letters like David sends out, and I'm really sorry, but I have fallen so far behind in my correspondence that this seems the only way to remotely catch up. Then, when you all reply - some of you take longer than others, then I can get back into the swing of things and get the proper "rhythm" going again. (If the Lord would see fit to grant a new typewriter from somewhere it would help too.)

David & I have finally moved into our own apt. Myself and a member of the Congregation here took a 22ft moving van - loaned by a member of our Columbia Church- to horrible Birmingham Ala (Ugh! that place gives me the creeps-even the "Church" there is backward Baptist !) to collect our furniture from David's old apt. His room mate was still there of course but hadn't packed anything as arranged, so I had to crazily pack stuff in two days and get it loaded into the truck (down four flights of narrow stairs, never thought the sofa would make it) then head back here by Sat afternoon for unloading. The Congregation here all gathered and helped with it all and by Sun evening almost everything was put away. We had a potluck supper afterwards - actually I needed a stiff drink, if you ask me - and a good time was had by all.

Delores, Ragona, Chicken legs, Arnold Hutchings, Gregory; You all need to write!! (says me who can't even manage it himself.) Troy - why can't we get anyone to send a couple of In Unity? I've tried since Sept 1981. If I don't get a response soon you know what Church Services Dept can do with their Dept. O. K. ? Apart from that, I love you, Jesus loves you, Mac likes you (I think)...

Ken & Marge, Thanks for the W2, it was good of you to mail it out so quickly, when I retire to the Bahamas on my Tax return I'll send you a card or a yacht or something.

The Church here is gliding along; for now we seem to have got the interested ones--all 10 of them; It would appear there had been an MCC here before, but people were not impressed so it folded. (soud familiar?) So we are wading through a lot of bad memories etc. but are holding our own and consolidation is being accomplished. We honestly need to do something about REAL training for Clergy; how to behave, for example. Not to mention a more Ecumenical expression. a lot of our Southern Churches are exclusively Baptist in style with no place at all for Liturgical members - the Pastor is completely ignorant of Liturgy - which is a disgrace in an ecumenical church - but nothing is being done about it. I hope I'm not put on the Dist. Review Committee this year, or there will be a lot of prospective Clergy who won't make it, heh! Although, if HQ doesn't care, I guess one should not be more 'Catholic than the Pope' eh? Anyway at least in Chas. we are an Ecumenical Christian Church etc. as Troy laid down in the good old days, so I guess that's the main thing.

Other than that, things seem to be zipping along in an orderly fashion. Am now a volunteer Tutor for the Adult Literacy Campaign - teaching adults how to read and write, am on the referral list as a Chaplain for Southern Pines mental hospital, and Charleston's Hotline. Plus have been invited to address an A. M. E. (Methodist Episcopal) Church youth group on aims, goals & achievements, in the near future.

So, as you all can see, all that combined with getting the home in order, and

the Church's outreach motivated, it does tend to eat into one's mail time.

Am in good health so far, which is useful when one has no health insurance, but once the Congregation grows (with some employed members) that will be #1 on the salary list.

David is fine, as you saw in his recent 'newsletter' and is doing very well at a full time job in the Hospital field. This can be a bit of a hassle for his Ministry, but we do need to eat and cover old debts re moving from California last year, so this is the only way to manage; I have no American qualifications for a Job, so it is easier for him to obtain one than for myself.

Hope you all are well and happy, and not letting the bad times get to you too much, or the good times for that matter - after all it is Lent, you know. David is now on Midnight to 8 AM shift, so is presently sound asleep as I write this; he will have the shift through March, he is starting to look like an owl. Heh!

Prayers are requested for my Granny: she is now in her mid eighties, and is getting a bit dodderly, losing pension cheques, wandering off etc. She is in my home in Adelaide Australia, and they really think she should go to a nursing home, but she is resisting the idea. I think it would be better for her, but? One can hardly have the poor old soul evicted or something.

Well, have got to go, all I need to do now is go and get this copied at the print-shop and then mailed off. Let's hope I manage to do it before the news gets stale, or the paper turns yellow with age.

Much love to you all, write soon;

In Jesus' Name

+ Stan... XX



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Metropolitan Community Church

Min
Corr.

2904 CONCORDIA AVENUE

TAMPA, FLORIDA 33609



TELEPHONE (813) 839-5939

REV. JOHN H. HOSE, B. D., M. S., PASTOR

Rev. Jean M. Bush, Associate Pastor

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA***REVEREND JEAN M. BUSH

The Reverend Jean M. Bush
6250 68th. Terrace North
Pinellas Park, Florida 33565
Phone: 813-546-7076

The following data is presented in five sections:

- I. PERSONAL HISTORY
- II. RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND
- III. EDUCATIONAL TRAINING
- IV. ADDITIONAL PERSONAL INFORMATION
- V. SOURCES OF RECOMMENDATION AND REFERENCE

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at the above address or phone number.



PERSONAL HISTORY

NAME: Jean Marie Bush

ADDRESS: 6250 68th. Terrace North, Pinellas Park, FL 33565

PHONE: Area Code 813 Phone: 546-7076

EMPLOYMENT: City of Pinellas Park Fire Department (3 Years)
Position: Fire Dispatcher and Executive Secretary

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: Ht. 5'3½" Wt. 175 Hair S&P Eyes Green Age 32
Birthdate: May 23, 1946

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

PREVIOUS: Roman Catholic Baptism at birth, Communion, age 7
Confirmation, age 11
12 years religious instructions

PRESENT AFFILIATION: Metropolitan Community Church

December 1973, M.C.C. St. Louis, MO.
April 21, 1974 M.C.C. St. Louis, MO. Charter Member
1974 Baptism into M.C.C. by Rev. Elder Carol Cureton
May 1974 Deacon Candidate through June 1975

June 1975 moved to Tampa area: M.C.C. King of Peace
Active member from June 1975 through March 1976

March 1976 Tampa M.C.C. Membership transferred
March 1976 Exhorter Candidate July 1976 Licensed Exhorter
May 6, 1978 Approved for Licensing as Minister by DRC
August 6, 1978 Received License from Fellowship

PRESENT ACTIVITIES: Associate Pastor at the Tampa M.C.C. Duties include scheduling of Ministerial staff, teaching of Deacon's classes, Worship services at Tampa. Additional Worship services as guest at King of Peace, Ft. Myers, and our local nursing home.

Worship Services to include: Preparation of Sermon, Music, Bulletins, Order of Worship, Celebration of Communion and Prayers.

ALSO ACTIVE IN: Exhorter Training Program, Choir, Maintenance,
Social Committee, Crusader Staff Writer, Counseling,
Speaker for College's and other organizations.

EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: St. Philip Grade School, East St. Louis, Ill.
grades 1 through 7

JUNIOR HIGH: Clark Junior High School, East St. Louis, Ill.
grades 8 through 9

SENIOR HIGH: East St. Louis, Senior High School, East St. Louis,
Ill. grades 10 through 12 Curriculum: Business
Graduated: June 4, 1964

UNITED STATES ARMY:
Cooks and Bakers School, Fort Knox, Ky. 8 weeks
Sept. 1964 through November 20, 1964 (Certificate)
Leadership Orientation Class: Fort McClellan, Ala.
8 weeks, June 1964 through August 14, 1964 (Certificate)
Emergency Medical Care: Fort McClellan, Ala 120
hours June 1964 through July 24, 1964 (Certified)

BAILEY TECHNICAL SCHOOL:
St. Louis, Mo. Automotive and Diesel Mechanics
Avg. "A" January 1972 through February 1973 (Diploma)

MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE:
Avg. "A" Chicago, Ill. (correspondence) Bible Survey
May 1973 through May 1975

SUICIDE PREVENTION INC.
St. Louis, Mo. Crisis Intervention Center 80 hours
training with staff, 1 year as Volunteer (Certified)
Counseling experience

SAMARITAN THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE:
Avg. "A" Los Angeles, California (correspondence, enrolled
student since August 1976) "New Testament Survey"
Leading More Effective Worship Note: (I will be
taking the following courses at the upcoming Ministers
Conference in April: "MCC and The Church Universal,
Ecumenical Relations" and Inclusive Language
both are being offered in conjunction with Samaritan)

EDUCATIONAL TRAINING CONT'D

CREDITS THROUGH REV. ELDER JOHN H. HOSE (SAMARITAN)

Grade avg. March 1976 through present time "Practical Theology"
"A" "Homosexuality and Counseling"; "Church Administration"
 "New Testament Survey"; UFMCC Polity, "Church History"

ST. PETERSBURG JUNIOR COLLEGE

Grade point St. Petersburg, Fla. Student finishing 3rd. year.
average Communications I (English)
 Speech Western Civilizations (History)
 Advanced Speech and Parliamentary Procedures
4.0 Religions of Man (Comparative Religions)
 Psychology
 Marriage, Sexuality, and Alternative Lifestyles (Sociology)
 Algebra
 Creative Writing

MEMBER OF: Phi Rho Pi Speech Honorary-S.P.J.C. December 9, 1976

ATTENDED: Speech Competition at the University of North Florida
December 2,3, 1977 Persuasive Speech "Anita Bryant"
Rank: Two second places

Speech Competition at Sante Fe Community College in
Gainsville Florida March 1978, Entertaining speech
and Impromptu rounds. 3rd place plaque and one first.

Speech Competition at University of Florida, Gainsville
Persuasive speech: "Women In The Ministry" Rank 3rd place
trophy and two firsts.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

I would like to continue my education on the Junior College
level until I complete my Associate's degree. I also would
like to obtain an Associate in Theology.

RECENT EXPERIENCE Associate Pastor of the Tampa M.C.C. under the
direction and leadership of The Rev. Elder John H. Hose.
See attached reference letter.

ADDITIONAL PERSONAL INFORMATION

SPOUSE: Shirley Glynn also member of M.C.C.
Licensed Deacon- Tampa Church
Charter Member of the St. Louis Church
Holy Union performed by Rev. Elder Carol Cureton on
October 12, 1974 St. Louis, Mo.
Celebrated 7th. Anniversary on January 12th, 1979

ACTIVITIES:

I enjoy outside sports such as camping, fishing, and
enjoying God's beauty.

I also enjoy bowling, wood carving, wood working and
cooking on occassion.

I like to write poetry and have recently been accepted
for publishing in a Feminist Anthology entitled:
Cybele's Wine, which is scheduled for printing this
Spring or early summer. Two of my poems are to be
published.

I am also active as a speaker on "Homosexuality and
the Church" at the college.

SOURCES OF RECOMMENDATION AND REFERENCE

Reverend Elder John H. Hose, Pastor, M.C.C. Tampa
2904 Concordia Ave. Tampa, FL 839-5939

Ms. Barbara J. Hull, Speech Teacher, St. Petersburg J.C.
4938½ 22nd. Street N. St. Petersburg, FL 525-5307

Mrs. Betty Marlin, Religion Teacher, St. Petersburg J.C.
7600 138th. Street N. Seminole, FL 397-4210

Mrs. Lil Casna, Co-worker, Edwardsville, Illinois
1905 Madison Ave. Edwardsville, Illinois

Mrs. Pat Zyk, Spanish Teacher, Shorecrest School
5054 18th. Street North, St. Petersburg, FL. 526-0305

Reference letters furnished upon request.



Metropolitan Community Church

2904 CONCORDIA AVENUE

TAMPA, FLORIDA 33609



TELEPHONE (813) 839-5939

REV. JOHN H. HOSE, B. D., M. S., PASTOR

March 20, 1979

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is with pleasure that I recommend for your consideration as pastor the Rev. Jean M. Bush.

Rev. Bush has been a member of the Tampa church since March, 1976; was licensed as an exhorter in July, 1976; and received her licensure as a minister in the Fellowship in August, 1978.

Rev. Bush has served the Tampa church in her various capacities with cooperation, sincerity, enthusiasm and devotion. On the occasions when she has conducted the Sunday worship service, she has done so in a most professional manner. Her messages to the congregation have been well-delivered, inspirational and timely.

Rev. Bush has the facility of relating well to persons of both sexes and of all ages. She has an excellent rapport with her contemporaries. Her personal life is beyond reproach.

If you should be desirous of further information regarding Rev. Bush, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours, in fellowship,

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

H. Ernest Richardson, Church Clerk
(For the Board of Directors)

THE KINGSTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Kingston, Rhode Island 02881

Dear Marge,

Many thanks for the time and energy and insights that you shared with both the Senior Highs and adults Sunday evening. It was extremely helpful and informative and we really appreciated the opportunity to grow in our understanding.

Our prayers are with you in your ministry.
Thanks again for sharing with us.

In Christ
Joy Edwards

Dear Rev. Ragona,

My records show that on May 26, 1978 and June 18, 1978 I sent you letters regarding the future of M.E.R. in your district.

Why have you not had the courtesy to answer my letters?

Beverly A. Minnit
1044 Stanton Terrace
Pittsburgh, PA. 15201
412-781-4638.

Emmaus Metropolitan Community Church

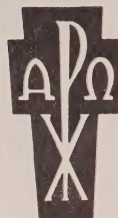
(AN AUTHORIZED FEASIBILITY STUDY)

"Where God's People Do Not Discriminate"

401 Washington Avenue

Miami Beach, FL 33139

(305) 672-9207



Marge.

It was so good to hear your voice.
Hope things are SUPER well. Glad
to hear about the new relationship.

If I get too cold this winter - Come
on down - the water is fine.

Had a note from Appleby - would it
be appropriate for me to respond? It
sounded fairly healthy.

She - and Ray Lariviere also indicated
some rumors that I had disappeared.
left the fellowship BC - Do you have
any idea about the origin? I'd
appreciate knowing, if that's possible.

Michael was pleased to hear we had spoken.

George E. Wright

1 Harvey St.,
E. Norwalk,
Ct., 06855-

Sept. 9, 1978

Dear Marge:

Anxiously looking forward to
our Oct. 20-22 conference.

Wondering if you wanted
me to choose the choruses &
hymns for the services or just
plan to be the song leader for
them.

Do you know the Chorus:
"In the Name of Jesus"? - we
have the victory! Hots of nice, new
ones. For my solo I'd like to do
"I'm Free!"

So good to see you in brief

at Gay Pride March N.Y.
June 25th.

Sorry I don't have your
full address. Hope delay
was not too bad.

How about a newsletter
or periodical. Does your
church have one? Here
would like to be on your mailing
list.

Love, George

11/19/77

Rev. Marge Racono,

I'm writing you because I am presently exploring the Church's role in dealing with homosexuality. I have heard that you and your church are very active with the gay population. The major focus of my inquiry centers around my desire to establish my own position on this issue, which is compatible with my religious beliefs. I am an active member of the Methodist church and I am planning on entering the ministry.

It seems that most of the actively religious people I know are highly condemnatory of the gay population. I am interested in how you blend your religion with your counseling/speaking activities at the Matthewson Church. What significance do Paul's condemnations take on for you in the New Testament? What is your approach to and understanding of the gay population (homosexuality). You could say that I'm looking for a balance to offset the fundamentalist anti-gay views I am being bombarded with.

My present leanings are ~~lean~~ towards an accepting liberal stance. However, I am having trouble reconciling this with what I have been taught about God and the Bible. So, please don't be afraid of making a too lengthy response. I sincerely want to know more about how homosexuality mixes/conflicts with Christianity. Any information or opinions you could offer would be helpful. Christianity, to me, has to be a vital active part of how I deal with the

issues in the world. This does not mean mindlessly
accepting others' interpretations of Christianity.
Please to take the time to share your views
and understandings with me.

Earnestly Yours,
Linda E. Ness

LINDA E. NESS
235 PALM BEACH AVE.
NARRAGANSETT, R.I.
02882



METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

OF PROVIDENCE

POST OFFICE BOX 1462

PROVIDENCE, RI 02901

Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor
5 Junction Street, Providence
(401) 272-9247

Sunday Services - 7:00 PM
134 Mathewson St.

January 17, 1977

Ms. Linda E. Ness
235 Palm Beach Avenue
Narragansett, R.I. 02882

Dear Ms. Ness:

Thank you for your letter of November 19, 1977, and I am sorry to have taken so long to answer, but your letter was just passed on to me by the secretary at Mathewson Street Methodist Church, an oversight on her part.

Metropolitan Community Churches are Christian churches, whose major thrust is in the gay community. We were begun by Rev. Troy Perry in 1969 with 12 people attending the first service in Los Angeles, California. MCC's are now in 103 communities in the United States, England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Africa. We have about 44,000 members at the present time.

Our church was founded because so much of the Christian community is condemnatory of gay people, and gay people -- as all people -- stand in need of God's love, guidance, and forgiveness. Paul, you will remember, said "that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Gays, as well as others, agree with that statement, but have elected not to be the only sin-bearers of the world.

Please understand that although we meet at the Mathewson Street Methodist Church, I am not a Methodist at present. My father is, however. I became a Southern Baptist in 1963 by my own choice, after an intense religious experience, in which I felt that whatever sins I had committed in my past were forgiven by the atonement of Jesus Christ, and that I, as well as all Christians, could count myself justified by my faith despite my sins. I can, we all can, because I doubt that Jesus Christ said, "I am dying only for the sins of heterosexuals, and the gates of heaven are closed to gays." I sincerely doubt that Jesus would have meant that -- and I suspect that Paul's condemnation of homosexuality was that of a Jewish Pharisee in a Greek world (where homosexuality, no doubt, shocked him.) Paul, however, was not Jesus. And while I think the Bible to be inspired, I do believe that Paul was not infallible. He could and did think in the beliefs and prejudices of his day.

I think that gays, as well as straights, need to look at their own consciences and decide what to do with Jesus, but I do not think

that one's homosexuality can necessarily be prayed away, fasted away, psychoanalyzed away -- nor can the most intense religious experience always take it away. I have tried all of the above and experienced the latter. I have finally dedicated my life to God, and decided that God, having created me, must be able to use my life and me "just as I am."

Sept 11, 78

Dearest Marge,

Hi! Just a little note to tell you how much we are looking forward to seeing you, and sharing the joys of District Conference. We will probably be coming up by car, along with three other people. Anita and I, (along with many others) are in need of healing and spiritual renewal. When I saw Jean in Warster she told me she knew and felt good things were coming for the N.Y. Church. At the time it was hard to believe, but now I know our church is going to be healed, and start growing and be a more positive force in the District. As a Deacon it will be up to me to be part of that healing. You know I have always loved and cared for you, Marge. Without you, I would have never had the courage to be anything in that church. Starting in October I will be Senior Deacon, and I guess you know my ministry has been and uphill battle.

But my Womens Group is my pride and joy. I have worked very hard this past year on instilling a sense of "family" into the women who have been coming regularly. It is still a small group (10-15) but it has been very rewarding seeing the Holy Spirit guide one or two of them through the church doors. I have enclosed one of the copies of the schedule. I hope we can have some time so you can give me some pointers?

I am home with a cold today. The weather has been so y-ect!

Anyway, God be with you and we will see you soon.

Love in Christ,
Leem & Anita

ments will a... patrolling the parking lot.

"I intend to keep things under control this summer," Kiley said.

Gaffney seriously hurt in early-morning crash

PROVIDENCE — John K. Gaffney, 19, of 75 Benefit St., a member of the city's Human Relations Commission, was seriously injured when two cars collided at Pine and Richmond Streets at about 12:05 a.m. yesterday.

Gaffney was reported in critical condition last night in the intensive care unit of Rhode Island Hospital, where his name was on the danger list. He suffered injuries to his spleen, liver and right lung. The entire right side of his rib cage was broken, a hospital spokeswoman said.

Police said Gaffney was a passenger in a car driven by Charles L. Noice, 33, of 58 North St., East Providence.

Police said Noice's car was traveling north on Richmond Street when it collided with a westbound car on Pine Street, driven by Jean F. Smith, 31, of 373 Bayview Ave., Cranston.

Noice was treated at the hospital for a broken jaw and bruises to the right shoulder.

Miss Smith was taken to the hospital, but she declined medical attention, police said, adding that she also refused a Breathalyzer test.

KENT

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Kent Kings: 12 r

408 N. Lincoln Ave.
Middlesex, N.J. 08846
January 31, 1978

Rev. Marge Ragona
MCC - Providence
134 Mathewson St.
Providence, R.I.

Dear Rev. Ragona,

I read an article about you a few months ago in the Gay Community News and I was very excited and confused.

I'm Catholic, gay and very troubled about religious attitudes towards gay people especially when I'm quoted Scriptures that say homosexuality is abominable to the Lord and all other things that say I'm a sinner.

I'm 35, I've been gay ever since I can remember and I'm very much in

love with a wonderful person. We've been sharing our lives for six happy years and I just can't believe that this relationship is sinful, is it?

How do you reconcile the fact that you're gay and a minister? How do you answer people when they quote the Bible to you, Leviticus, Romans?

I would deeply appreciate any answers you can give me.

I realize you must be very busy. So thank you very much for your time.

I've just turned to Christ again after a lapse of 17 years and this problem is really bothering me.

Thank you, again.

Yours truly,
Judy Melowski

Allen Groom
Arthur Runyon
P.O. Box 19525
Washington, D.C.
20036



Herkimer at Oriskany 1777 by Yohti
US Bicentennial 13cents

Rev. Marge Ragone
MCC Providence
POB 1462



EDWARD P. BEARD
20 DISTRICT, RHODE ISLAND

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
131 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-2735

COMMITTEES:
EDUCATION AND LABOR
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

DISTRICT OFFICES:
307 POST OFFICE ANNEX
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903
(401) 528-4861
325 WEST SHORE ROAD
WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND 02889
(401) 528-4871

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

August 11, 1978

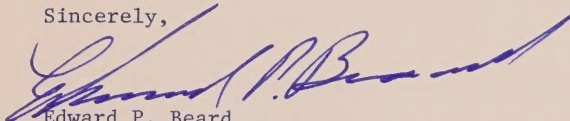
Reverend Marge Ragona
5 Junction Street
Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Reverend Ragona:

I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of your communication in which you express your feelings on the legislation intended to extend the time limitation for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

The expression of your sentiments is appreciated, and I would like to thank you for taking the time to give me the benefit of your thoughts as I deliberate this matter.

Sincerely,



Edward P. Beard
Member of Congress

EPB:efg

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REV M RAGONA
5 JUNCTION ST
PROVIDENCE RI 02907

THIS MAILGRAM IS A CONFIRMATION COPY OF THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE:

4012729247 TDMT PROVIDENCE RI 11 08-10 0553P EST
PMS REPRESENTATIVE EDWARD T BEARD
131 COMMON HOUSE OFFICE BLDG
WASHINGTON DC

PLEASE SUPPORT THE BILL TO EXTEND TIME FOR RATIFICATION OF ERA.
REVEREND MARGE RAGONA 5 JUNCTION ST PROVIDENCE

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1 4012729247 MGM TDMT PROVIDENCE RI 08-10 0552P EST

REV M RAGONA
5 JUNCTION ST
PROVIDENCE RI 02907

THIS MAILGRAM IS A CONFIRMATION COPY OF THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE:

4012729247 TDMT PROVIDENCE RI 11 08-10 0552P EST
PMS REPRESENTATIVE FERNAND G ST GERMAIN
2136 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BLDG
WASHINGTON DC

PLEASE SUPPORT THE BILL TO EXTEND TIME FOR RATIFICATION OF ERA.
REVEREND MARGE RAGONA 5 JUNCTION ST PROVIDENCE

1755 EST

MGMCOMP MGM



FREDERICK H. BELDEN
BISHOP

THE DIOCESE OF RHODE ISLAND

CATHEDRAL HOUSE
275 North Main Street
Providence, R. I. 02903
TELEPHONE
(401) 274-4500

August 7, 1978

Rev. Marge Ragona
Metropolitan Community Church of Providence
Post Office Box 1462
Providence, RI 02901

Dear Pastor Ragona:

In the Bishop's absence, I acknowledge receipt of your letter of July 28, regarding the service to be held August 14.

Bishop Belden is attending the Lambeth Conference in England and will not be returning until September 1. I enclose the tickets which you so kindly sent on to him in case there happens to be someone else able to use them.

Sincerely,

Lois A. Ray (Mrs. Warren A.)
Secretary to the Bishop

F. Godine

SPEECH, HEARING AND LANGUAGE CENTER

NEW ENGLAND MEDICAL CENTER HOSPITAL

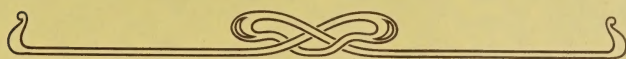
185 Harrison Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02111



*Rev. Marge Rapana
5 Junction St.
Providence, Rhode Island
02907*

EA

BENEFIT
FOR
GAY COMMUNITY SERVICES
OF RHODE ISLAND



SPAGHETTI DINNER

AT

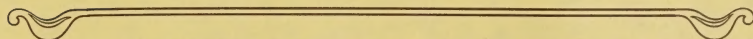
ALL YOU MARTI'S CAN EAT \$3.00

SUNDAY APRIL 16

1 - 5 PM

AT

MARTI'S LOUNGE
174 RAILROAD AVE.
CENTRAL FALLS, R. I.



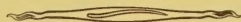
ADVANCE SALE ONLY
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT

MARTI'S

OR

CALL GAY HELP LINE
FOR RESERVATIONS

751-3322 8-12 PM



Sylvia Mc Lee - LFV

11 AM

Ann Walsh
781-1698

4 pm

24 three
April 28th week - RIC Symposium -

Malcolm

Rita

Gay Heath

Arnie Kantrowitz
Vito Russo
Isabel Miller for
Ruth Simpson
Jade + Salsp. \$600
Fri Nite

Adv. \$200 -

\$80 postage

\$2600

Transport
+ Honorarium

Sgt. Dannelly — Col. Ricci

asked to testify against

6th

Vote out sexual orientation

Tomorrow HRC

Alderman's Chamber

Hearing Wed.

pad 11x17 cross hatch paper

Press Type

Wine / Cheese 100/200 people RSVP

\$100 front money -

Monday - wine ? Cheese

Seder - Matzsch, wine or MD

Chicken

Wots - Apples

Curry - Parsley - Egg - Ham & Shook

Horseradish - Gefilte fish

Rice

Salad

Sponge Cake

Coffee

Chicken soup - Matzo balls

Call

lean-re Prestype sizes-styles
most efficient for 11x17 posters

Tray

Paul Gillespie

Has been notified

Dr. Zeigler

? Liberal Jewish

Thomas

> Enclman Pearlman - (Ortho. Jewish)

Committee

March 22 - Will remove sexual orientation
deal compel full Council to vote on
sexual orient.

April 7

Bruce Valler in R.I. - Big media blitz
Interviews - News Rap #36 - 10 etc. Journal-Bulletin
Press Conf -

April 6 - Storrs Conn. - U. Conn. Bruce V.
Council may vote against -

5³⁰ Recept. First Unit -
Rally - RIC

Three
April 20 - Lobbying

April 20 - Vote

Mailing Permit

24 pt

36 pt

~~60 pt~~

~~72 pt~~

14 pt

Tactype 2.30 page

Helvetica -
Helv. Bold.

Mike D. 831-7171

Statement

Me ACLU - ^{Mike} Dallinger
Dick Danneberg

Alderman's
Chamber
Pigg, back
10:10

Monday - Press Conf - State Advisory

Tuesday - Urban League - Black Leaders

Rat. ^{spons.} ~~Human~~ Relat. Commission
Rat. Carter Congdon St Bapt Ch.
421-4032 Pres. Mass. R. Bapt. Ass.
O.T. fury NT compassion

(Gay USA
from)

hic, # since Jan summer
Police had kids in custody, let go.

Beating - In front of Buttery op. La Boheme
Blue van - catcalls
Hit w/ baseball bat
Stitches,

/ Police abusive -
- HRC - 130 Monday -
/ Sgt. Donnelly -

- Election year - Police Chief

SAC
Civil Rts. Commission - Disc. in criminal justice
1:30 Monday - Meeting 40 Fountain op Jnl Bulletin
3rd floor -

- Eric Curtini
- Judy Rider -
-
-

Ashbury Methodist Church
Richard (?)

Sisters of Mercy

Father-Frank Justice - Vicar for Diocesan
278-4585 278-4525 Community Affairs

- Paul Gillespie -
861-1702

Press Release - Conf.

Aelderman's Rm
Thurs. - Conf. Concerned Community Leadership
Support for ordination
(Demand date ?) done

Individuality -- but we also bring with us a lot of "baggage" which keeps us from growing as much as we could. None of us is immune to prejudices and angers which we developed long before we came to MCC -- and many of us limit ourselves because we cannot shed some of the more limiting parts of our own personalities. Someone once said that the perfect place for hypocrites is within the church, because there they do less damage. They are more confined and can only affect each other. Christian life is more than just what you say, more than just what you do; it is who you believe and who you are in God's sight and what you can potentially become. Experiences place to test whether you have a vocation -- and many, many are called but few are chosen! For anyone to come through

May 31, 1978

Dear Michael:

First, let me again say to you that I did not speak to Jose Mojica about you -- I spoke to no one at all about you, although one person from my church asked me who you were and why you were not participating in the service Friday evening.

Secondly, let me reiterate that I would not have done so. I intuited what you were angry about, but felt that you had a perfect right to do so, if that was your choice. We all have freedom of choice; however, when that freedom causes us pain, then someone should reach out to attempt to comfort. That was what I attempted to do. And I reached out, even though Jean explained there was some risk, because you might have hit out in your anger and pain. I took that chance, first because I do not think you would have hit me, and secondly because you and I have been friends.

Jose is not an idiot. Of all the ministers of this fellowship, he is probably most in touch with the pain we all experience. It is sometimes difficult for him to bring out what he really wants to say in absolutely perfect English, but he tries. Jose was a Pentecostal minister in Puerto Rico, and was publicly defrocked for his homosexuality. It was out of conviction that he began work with Spanish-speaking gays in New York, and I remember well when he was first proposed for the ministry through MCC-N.Y. Do not put him down because his English is not as good as his Spanish. His Spanish is exquisite and speaks for his education in his own language. He is a sensitive and loving human being. That he happened to tread on your toes (and those of many who do not understand cross-cultural religious experiences) was inadvertent. You just happened to be an outspoken (by your silence and attitude) advocate of a different position.

It is true, as you say, that one does not have to go to church to be a Christian. It is also limiting of the average person's spiritual growth to not assemble for worship. Out of the group experience comes a greater understanding of the Christian church in koinonia -- as a community. There is a strengthening, unifying, reconciling mission of the church within the church which comes from the experience of sharing worship. Not all of our experiences come from reaching out -- some of them come from reaching in, and worship is one of these experiences.

Each of us is entitled to our own religious beliefs. One of the joys of MCC is that we are all believing adults and we bring with us our

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- Judy Rider -
-

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individuality -- but we also bring with us a lot of "baggage" which keeps us from growing as much as we could. None of us is immune to prejudices and angers which we developed long before we came to MCC -- and many of us limit ourselves because we cannot shed some of the more limiting parts of our own personalities. Someone once said that the perfect place for hypocrites is within the church, because there they do less danger. They are more confined and can only affect each other. Christian life is more than just what you say, more than just what you do; it is what you believe and who you are in God's sight and what you can potentially become. Exhorterships are a place to test whether you have a vocation -- and many, many, many are called but few are chosen! For anyone to come through an exhortership means being tested, and tested, and tested. If you are faking it, if you are in it for ulterior motives, if you are insincere -- it will come out before you are through, and there are weeding out processes that will reveal the fakers. Don't you worry about it, Holy Spirit has ways to reveal the unready, the unyielded, and the unwilling. Continue to live your Christian life, but leave yourself open for the Holy Spirit to deal with others -- and with you.

Misconception #1. "The way I understood this weekend's schedule of events was that Fri. eve was to be Boston's service, Sat. a.m., Alpha and Omega, and Sat. eve. MCC Hispana."

This is a District conference. All worship services are for the building of District unity. A&O and Hispana have been feeling left out of the worship services as they have been planned for the last two -- and for Hispana the last two years' services. The whole theme of the conference was "Participation of the Laity." Boston's service was intended to demonstrate lay participation -- a totally non-clergy led service. Any worship service belongs to the participants, not to the persons at the altar. Even when the Church sets up a division between clerics and laity, wherein the laity observe while the clerics worship, there is a suborning of that intent. The participants do become involved if they permit themselves. A & O's worship practices are those of Pentecostals, including gambourines, speaking in tongues, etc. Your feeling that they were doing something "wrong" is cultural. They were expressing their religious emotions the way they have been taught to, expressing what they have been told is the "right" way to worship. The problem is that it is "different" and we are taught in our culture that was is not like us is "other" and there is something wrong about being "other."

Boston does indeed have its dignity -- and its warmth. But for our friends from A & O that warmth is hidden. Someone once characterized Boston's religious attitude as their being "God's frozen chosen." We all see what is different as so hostile to our own persons that we don't see the warmth, all we see is the difference.

Many, many people from the New York MCC are carrying tremendous burdens of dislike and distrust for the A & O group. There has been a tremendous amount of politicking back and forth there. One of the reasons I came to Boston originally was to escape the intrigue between the two groups. Each side claims right on its side. Each side is often equally guilty of Unchristian behavior and motives.

individually -- but we also bring with us a lot of "baggage" which keeps us from growing as much as we could. None of us is immune to prejudices and angers which we developed long before we came to MOC -- and many of us limit ourselves because we cannot shed some of the more limiting parts of our own personalities. Someone once said that the perfect place for hypnosis is within the church, because there they do less danger. They are more confined and can only affect each other. Christian life is more than just what you say, more than just what you do; it is what you believe and who you are in God's sight and what you can potentially become. Exhortation is a place to test whether you have a vocation -- and many, many are called but few are chosen! For anyone to come through an exhortation means pain, tested, and tested, and tested. If you are not taking it, if you are in it for inferior motives, if you are insecure -- it will come out before you are through, and there are weekly out processes that will reveal the "others". Don't you worry about it, Holy Spirit has ways to reveal the unready, the unyielded, and the unwilling. Continue to live your Christian life, but leave yourself open for the Holy Spirit to deal with others -- and with you.

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A & O is not a "zoo." It is a group of Christians unlike us in many ways. The people who make up the A & O group are: Blacks, Hispanics, ex-offenders, handicapped, white evangelicals, white Pentecostals, Hispanic Pentecostals, Salvationists, Black Baptists, Catholic charismatics -- and all of these were made to feel unwelcome at New York. A & O began with a small group of Blacks and Hispanics who felt that there was no longer a welcome for them at N.Y. when there was a change of minister. His choice of worship style was "high church" in their understanding, too rote, too fixed, and left no place for the work of the Holy Spirit in the worship. They began another study group where they could feel at home. They were never asked to go away from N.Y.; they left N.Y. to be able to worship God in a way that was familiar to them, and to maintain their own dignity in a church which did not welcome "the other." Others also left N.Y. -- realize that Hispana had earlier left because they felt Hispanics needed to worship God in a language that was familiar to them. A & O left in order to worship God in a spiritual language which was familiar to them. An order of Catholics and Episcopalians left in order to worship in a spiritual language which was familiar to them, and which had to be dissolved because it was divisive of the unity which is essential to MCC.

I did not notice that you were not at the A & O sponsored service. And I did not question your reason for not being there. I did notice your anger and your pain at the Hispana service, and I think that was when I reached out. Rote prayers are part of the worship ritual for many groups. Episcopalians put great store by the Book of Common Prayer, the Presbyterians by the Book of Common Worship, Catholics by the ritual of the Mass. It is not just "following the pack." It is performing the rituals we have been taught to live by because this is the "way we do it." Just as A & O follows the expectations they do because this is "the way we do it." All groups define themselves by their own "way." None of them is right or wrong. We meet our own needs by finding the way which is closest to meeting our own internalized way.

I don't worry about you "sassing me." I'm not your mother. I do worry about you not growing as a Christian -- and tolerance of differences is an important part of all of our growth processes. Especially in MCC where we're from so many different traditions and have so many expectations of what church ought to be, we need to learn to experience what our brother and sister finds valuable -- not internalize it as our own, but understand it as another kind of valuable way -- valid for him or her, but valid nonetheless as a variety of religious experience.

Claudia Vierra's reachable at MCC-East Bay, 2714 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, Calif. 94705 and she's Rev. (pastor there).

I hope we are still friends. I love you -- and will.

In Christ,

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Gloria Viera's residence at MOC-East Bay, 2711 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, Calif. 94705 and she's Rev. (pastor there).

I hope we are still friends. I love you -- and will.

In Christ,

June 1st, 1978

Marge:

I apologize for my rudeness at the Saturday Eve church service. Never before had my opinion of you slipped so low. I'm sorry that it has, but I can't figure out a good reason for what you did- though you seem to deny it.

You also misunderstood what I was most angry about, which reinforces my belief that you had something to do with that sermon. What I was most upset about, was the fact that that idiot contradicted himself on a subject that I feel quite strongly on. He said something to the effect that- you don't have to go to church to be a Christian. My father taught me that one does not have to go to church every Sunday, anything we can do in the pew, we can do in the tub. And then, he hauls off in the same breathe, and says to be a good christian one HAS to go to church. Bullshit; and more of the same. I am sick and tired of being labeled an atheist because I don't believe ridiculous statements like that. One can practice his/her christianity each day with people at work, family, and friends. I would think as a minister, he should be aware that one of a churches problems is hypocrisy. Is it not hypocritical to be christian for an hour on Sunday, and leave it there when one leaves the church? On that grounds, i at least feel that I live my christian life, and not fake it like so many people at that church- including one exhorter.

What you had sensed I was angry about, yes, I was debating my feelings about. The way I understood this weekends schedule of events was that Fri. eve was to be Boston's service, Sat. a.m. -Alpha and Omega, and Sat eve- Mcc Hispana. First, on Friday, I along with others thought that the tamborines (early christian or not) were out of place with old traditional hymns. Even so, my feelings are when in Rome do as the romans do... I would no sooner walk into thier church and tinkle little bells during a community prayer, and I demand the same courtesy. On top of it all, I had friends from New York staying, I was totally embarrassed, and quick to add that I didn't know who they were, and that people in our church have a little more dignity and respect than to carry on like that,. It was then that I was informed that it was part of the Alfa-Omega zoo, and that because of little displays like that, they were asked to go away from MCC New York. (can't say as I blame them).

So I avoided Alpha omega service, as I noticed, so did many others. I will grant them that in a service that they are sponsoring, they can do as they will. But I do not have to accompany them, nor- and this is where you come in- do I have to put up with questions why and accusations that I'm wrong. I strongly feel that each person worships in their own way - and if one can not find peace in going along with the crowd he is welcome to do what suits him best - though I feel just as strongly that one should not interupt. This includes remaining seated or kneeling, while others do as they will. The main reasons on Saturday eve that I remained seated is that I do not ~~FEEL~~ that rehearsed continued prayers are worship. Using the lords prayer for instance, sure people repeat it all the time, but how many know what it means? Isn't indivial prayer more meaningful to the person? Following the pack. Good christianity is not following the leader. Do you realize how many children recite The Pledge of Allegiance? Do you know what happens when you ask them to put it on paper? They come up with words that arn't even there? How? Follow the leader. My feelings are the same about responsive readings.

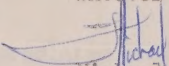
Again, I was out of line, sassing you like that, and you're right no one else would dare to comfort me- as fact 'care' is a much better word. I thank you for your response.

Now let's see ther was something else.

My letter to Claudia Viara(sp?) can I send that to Jean, and let her take care of it from there, or what?

I guess that's it.

Yours in Christ,
whoever you concieve him to be,



Michael Keith Atwood
323 Hyde park Avenue
Jr, Boston 02130

Michael Keith Atwood
323 Hyde Park Avenue
JP, Boston, Mass. 02131
June 3rd, 1978

Dear Marge:

Thank you for your letter - and so quick too.

I did not mean to insinuate that you had spoken to anyone about ME - I had thought that you had probably sensed a reaction from others as well. But if you say that you did not say anything, I believe you and mean no offense by my accusations. One learns that he'll never know if he doesn't ask.

I appreciated your reaching out, and always will - whether I show it or not. Unfortunately what happened on Sunday eve a few months ago, has labeled ME a contrivisial subject and keeps me from getting involved. You and I know that it was a wrong thing to do, but because only three people saw how it began, people who remember the brawl in the isle have branded ME unfairly and if one must know that truth it was that idiot Janice Curran. If one talks to her about it, she'll deny it, but both Bob and I know better. The reason, and this is the first time that I have spoke of this, that I went through the above shit, is that no matter who done it, I got branded purely because I was young and heated. And this stays with people like Jean who never saw what happened in the first place, but saw the end result, and was willing to listen to others people's interpretation - without ever coming to me, so I personally find her off track in this way. It does not change my opinion of her in any way, but it makes me wonder, she's not being very open to me, yet when we met she supposedly liked me and now when we see each other she's all hugs and kisses, I'm curious to see if it's all an act - and I'll have my eyes open.

I thank you for a moment of kindness when I was indeed feeling so hostile. It allow me to change paths and get over it a lot quicker. Most of the people that I have been struggling to deal with usually box me in 'til I have to 'fight to breathe' let alone get out. By saying "And I'm the only one who would dare!", you left the door wide open, and I thank you for it, you may think that's a simple thing to thank a person for, but it's a quality rarely found, and greatly appreciated.

I'm sorry. I'm all smiles right now. I did not remember calling Jose an idiot - so I pulled out my carbon copy, and sure as I'm sittin here... I must have been carried away - that came up because of his contradiction. Aside from being extremely handsome, I feel that he is sensitive, and brilliant, I didn't notice that his english was off. Unless you feel that his direct contradiction, was an error of english for what he wanted to say, that I'll like to believe, by his sermon - which on the whole I put up there with the TOP 5.

I agree with the limitations of a non-church going Christian, But we all fulfill the christian life in the way that best suits us. I feel that the church is important to one who needs or wants to grow, as one can't help but grow - especially in M.C.C. I'm prejudiced I know but my dad has been one of the better christians that I'd known, mostly because he has turned most of his beliefs into good ole' New England horse sense. All of us Atwoods get turned off on pushy fanatics - we lived only two houses from a Jehovahs Witness-

he taught us that when one needs an instant reassurance that's the kind of fulfillment that they look for, and then their belief usually become instant-sorta like oatmeal- it's there when you need it. She panicked when the government sent her husband home after a regular 6mo. naval mission, he had had a nervous breakdown, and eventually he was legally insane. Panic time. So we listened to her when she came around, and like any religion she had many good points on which to dwell. We have been brought up in a atmosphere tolerant of religion, my stepmother-Jewish, my father Easter Congregational, myself and brother and sister Baptist. No body around us was any thing but catholic. I've learned to observe, my grandmother once told me, "If it does not move you to do the customs of a church, do not feel that you are required to, you know the best way to worship - never in any way disrupt their service."

What I was angry and hurt by no one but you could clear up, and you did, and I feel better for it. Jose did not tread on my toes, I was already upset with the thought of being betrayed and viewed the service from that stand point. One thing that I had not mention was that I was feeling threatened, as much as I was elated by the singspiration, it is not anything I want every Sunday and I fear with our new Assistant minister (of whom I do not approve) the ideas may catch on.

The theme for the conference is one that I endorse, but seriously my own prejudices aside, I know of no one who understood it that way, the people I spoke to understood it the way I did. I say this not as "I told you so", but maybe next time it would be good if one would announce, along with the welcome, the purpose of the conference. That would ease any ~~mis~~ misinterpretations in the future.

I'm proud of Boston, not always happy about the reputation, though I think 'God's frozen chosen' is cute, only because I'm not sure of the tone it was said.

I'm not dumb enough to think that there was no prejudice in the New York MCC's. They themselves told me that they were looking at it from a very political view. I feel that that is their prerogative, as long as it does not interfere with their voting and beliefs in an ecumenical church. We talked a little about that Saturday night. But I don't feel that different is wrong. I'll never say that I'm always right, but I'll never impose my beliefs on anyone either. To me that is Unchristian Behavior.

When A&O carries on like that in a service, ~~an~~ one our services, it's a zoo and there's no other way around it. If and when in the future, they are invited to a service designated as an offering by MCC Boston, I will expect them to behave in an orderly fashion, or except the label 'zoo'. I do not mean that as a negative derogatory comment just difinative label.

I'M concerned about only one thing. When you said, " I don't worry about you 'sassing' me. I'm not your mother." Aside from biological fact, what was that supposed to mean? I never suggested such a thing. I, unlike Edward do not have a childish inklings, nor do I have any parental inclinations.

Yours in Christ,

P.S. I've been working like crazy on different ideas for sundays school materials. Through a freind I've got a name of a guy who is the head huncho who decides which materials Unitatian Sunday School shildren see or don't see. I've done allot of reading through this book and that, but before I go to far I would like to have you up for dinner at our place as a combination dinner/business talk. Please tell me when you and Jean can come. I'm really excited about this project, and would like to talk to as many clergy and gay parents and children that I can - and with you I'll kill two birds with one stone. Three! I'll get to show my appreciation for dinner at your house, speaking of which, we're not too far from you. I will wait to contact this guy from the Uniterian until I hear from you, I'M not at all sure of what it is I want to ask him, and as a mother as well as a minister your help will be extremely valuable.

Please excuse my typing , but ever since I got Harold a new/newer ribbon, he just hasn't been the same. Can't even spell.

Gordon-Conwell
Theological
Seminary



Department of Theology

South Hamilton, Massachusetts 01982
(617) 468-7111

2225 Buchtel Blvd., #901
Denver, Colorado 80210
September 18, 1978

Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor
Metropolitan Community Church
5 Junction Street
Providence, RI 02901

Dear Rev. Ragona;

Thank you for your letter of August 31. It did not arrive here in Denver until September 15, hence the date of this reply.

Since I am no longer teaching at Gordon-Conwell and am living in Colorado, I cannot, of course, accept your invitation to speak to your district conference in October. I appreciate your asking me and am pleased, too, that someone(s) found my lectures at Park Street Church helpful.

I have taken the liberty to send a copy of your letter to my friend, Dr. Ramsey Michaels, Professor of New Testament at GCTS. He is both learned and sensitive and would be an excellent choice if he is available. I have asked him, if he is not free for this engagement, to pass the information on to Dr. Richard Lovelace, Professor of Church History, who has made some study both of the gay movement and of spiritual renewal.

Thank you again for your kind invitation, and best wishes.

Very truly yours,

Eric G. Lemmon

cc: Ramsey Michaels, GCTS

November 16, 1978

Dear Paula:

Sorry it has taken me so long to write you, but immediately after the conference I left town for a week -- was in Baltimore for another conference, this time of women ministers -- and then came home to chaos. In my absence, the church had taken in a drug addict who had been thrown out of her apartment, and so there was a lot of stuff to handle with her since she had two kids who had to be institutionalized, etc.

Anyway, I finally got around to doing all the things I need to do in order to catch up, and you are number one on the list of letters to be written. The Board of Directors had voted you a gift -- which is on its way to you from the supplier. We hope you like it since it is something which carries with it both our love and our admiration.

I miss all of you. I wish we could move Providence to Boston, or Boston to Providence -- or somewhere get all my favorite people together under one roof.

We cannot possibly in words thank you for all the help you were to us during conference. I personally could not have run that conference if you had not been in the kitchen overseeing things and seeing to it that the things that needed doing were done. I still have not forgiven Paul for not helping more, and he has been relieved of his diaconate for some of the misbehavior at conference, plus other things. It doesn't make it up to you, I know, but it does relieve our consciences for having trusted him.

I love you. I can't remember when I have loved a human being who was not my lover more. In many ways I turn to you for more than just help when I need it, but for some of the parenting that I never had and which, I guess, all of us need from time to time. I loved having you and Connie stay with me, and I'm sorry I wasn't available when you left to say goodbye. Why didn't you just take a moment to stick your nose in and say Bye?

Don't know when I will be in Boston again for a while. Just remember you have my love and my admiration always.

Love, in Christ

November 16, 1978

Dear Paul:

Gerry it has taken me so long to write you, but immediately after the conference I felt I had to write you -- was in Baltimore for another conference, this time at Women's Ministries -- and then came home to Ohio. In my absence, the church had taken in a drug addict who had been thrown out of her apartment, and so there was a lot of stuff to handle with her since she had two kids who had to be hospitalized, etc.

Anyway, I finally got around to doing all the things I need to do in order to catch up, and you are number one on the list of letters to be written. The Board of Directors had voted you a gift -- which is a something way to you from the supplier. We hope you like it since it is something which carries with it both our love and our admiration.

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I love you. I can't remember when I have loved a human being who was not my lover more. In many ways I turn to you for more than just help. I need it, but for some of the parenting that I never had and which I guess all of us need time to time. I loved having you and Connie stay with me, and I'm sorry I wasn't available when you felt so very lonely. Why didn't you just take a moment to stick your nose in and say hey?

Don't know when I will be in Boston again for a while. Just remember you have my love and my admiration always.

Love, in Christ



Riverside Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

CHURCH (401) 433-2039
PARSONAGE (401) 437-1188

BULLOCKS POINT & OAK AVE.

RIVERSIDE, R. I. 02915

RAYMOND H. BRADLEY JR. PASTOR

Jan 15 1979

The Rev. Mrs Marge Ragma
5 Junction Street
Providence RI 02907

Dear Marge

On Behalf of the R-I. Ministers Association
of the United Church of Christ, I would like to
Thank you for sharing you views with us last
Thursday Jan 11. You were very informative and
enlightening. Many eyes were opened. Your sincere
forthright approach was overwhelming and
achieved the desired result.

It is my hope that as a result of our meeting,
we can develop some type of on going support
system of mutual benefit to all of our
ministers. I hope that we can work together
on other similar projects in the future.

Thank you for you very special ministry and
the wonderful way which you go about conducting
it.

Sincerely
Raymond H. Bradley Jr.
Ray,

March 9, 1979

Exhorter Jim Seal
MCC New York
675 Hudson Street
New York, New York

Dear Jim:

Thanks for your card and for your appreciation of our home. We enjoyed having both of you here. Funny how great winds run in the same evil channels -- we are also working on a hymnal this weekend -- our third. We will send you one when we get it done.

The books I suggested to the exhorters are:

Church History: Bainton, Roland: Christendom. Harper, 1964.
Enslin, Norton S.: Christian Beginnings. Parts I and II, Harper, N.Y. 1956
Early Christian Writings: Penguin, 1968
Meisel, Anthony and del Mastro, M.L.: The Rule of St. Benedict. Doubleday, 1975
Stansted, Vernon: Homiletics (not available at the moment, so I can't give you the publisher)

and

The Urgency of Preaching (someone has borrowed this, and I cannot give you either the author or the publisher. I think the author is Hagemann.

I can send you a bibliography of what I require from my exhorters in the way of reading if you are interested, but I haven't actually sat down and spelled it out for them. For the Bible course, I have been using Hayes, John H: Introduction to the Bible, but I have been supplementing it with xeroxes, etc. Best Old Testament Intro. is Anderson, Bernhardt: Understanding the Old Testament, which we will be using in the fall.

Book 2 of the Christendom series is available at the Wilson's bookstore on 8th Street or the one just past it. (\$1.00 a copy.) If I send you a check for \$5.00 can you buy me 5 copies and send them to me? (check for \$6.00 and then you won't have to pay the postage.)

About the Group Flight: Linda Garford at Beacon Tours in Boston is willing to handle the whole thing for both Boston and New York. Let me talk to her and get back to you.

To
Someone
Nice
on Mother's
Day





Arthur E. Sarcoccia
Michael O'Malley

Tony Masiello

Sheila Berger
Charles COMERTFORD

Kathy Martin
Jane Livingston

Happy
Mother's Day

Debby

Barbara Kendall.

Jim & Vay spread love

Bill Wagner

Billy Mencer.

Rolande Bernier
Donald Bousson

Your wonderful love,
William County

With love, Judy

Far. Mulholland

Pat Ryan
Lynn Brokey

How wonderful
this world would be

Barb
a
r
a

If more folks were like you—
Thoughtful, kind, considerate
And understanding, too—

That's why it's always pleasant
Just to have a chance to say
A person who's as nice as you
Deserves life's best each day

Raul

Elie Muller

Daniel Stinson
Eric Bourgeois
Vic Shepard

Winnifred

Love, Margaret Gentry, your significant other, I love you.
Steve Harris

I am with you
Bob & Linda

Steve Harris



American Greetings®

August 23, 1978

Ms. Paula Johnson
31 Herrick Road
Newton Center, Mass.

Dearest Paula:

First, let me say thanks for all your help while Troy was here. I wanted to write you earlier, but we had another person in the church suicide right after Troy's visit, and I've been busy picking up pieces of our friends ever since then. Phil Poirier, our florist, jumped from a bridge at Fall River, and his body has not yet been found.

To pleasanter things: We loved having you with us and really appreciated your help. You also helped keep peace in the kitchen, which was ever better. Troy was impressed with the meal, with our ability to get it together, and with the spirit of cooperation he found here in Providence. YOU are responsible for much of that, and I wanted to pass it along to you.

Ginny and I are doing very well. Our relationship is growing and taking deeper root ever day. Ginny is a good person, and she is good for me. Every day I find new things to love in her, and can see her growth as she finds new responsibilities and meets new challenges. We are very happy.

We're beginning to look forward to District Conference -- now about 7 weeks away. I can house you in Missy's room, since she's away (and she can stay at the church with us during Conference.) I need to be at the church both nights, since we will have about 25 women staying there. We're planning to take you to Marti's (mainly to have Marti meet you) the Saturday of the Conference. Marti owns our local women's bar and is a major supporter of the gay community, and particularly MCC. You will enjoy her.

It was nice having you over here, I miss you and think of you often. God's love surround you.

In Christ,

Marge

August 23, 1978

Ms. Paula Johnson
21 Newton Road
Newton Center, Mass.

Dearest Paula:

First, let me say thanks for all your help while Troy was here. I wanted to write you earlier, but we had another person in the church outside right after Troy's visit, and I've been busy picking up pieces of our friends ever since then. Phil Polster, our florist, jumped from a bridge at Fall River, and his body has not yet been found.

To pleasant things! We loved having you with us and really appreciated your help. You also helped keep peace in the kitchen, which was even better. Troy was impressed with the meal, with our ability to get it together, and with the spirit of cooperation he found here in Providence. YOU are responsible for much of that, and I wanted to pass it along to you.

Ginny and I are doing very well. Our relationship is growing and taking deeper root every day. Ginny is a good person, and she is good for me. Every day I find new things to love in her, and can see her growth as she finds new responsibilities and meets new challenges. We are very happy.

We're beginning to look forward to District Conference -- now about 7 weeks away. I can house you in Mary's room, since she's away (and she can stay at the church with us during Conference). I need to be at the church both nights, since we will have about 25 women staying there. We're planning to take you to Marti's (mainly to have Marti meet you) the Saturday of the Conference. Marti owns our local women's bar and is a major supporter of the gay community, and particularly MCC. You will enjoy her.

It was nice having you over here. I miss you and think of you often. God's love surrounds you.

In Christ,

April 16th 1979

Dear Forge

Hello - miss you. I hope that god truly has his hand in what endeavors you are undertaking.

That reminds me - I saw a bumper sticker the other day -
GOD IS COMING!!! ... and is she pissed! I chuckled over that all day!

Well the reason I wrote is to tell you that Frank and I are going to buy the house we're living in. As we've done to MCC'S Boston and New York, and will to Worcester, we would like to invite your church to use our home as a spot for a retreat - no charge. Its huge! all anyone needs is sleeping bags and food - or in the organizing of such event, we could make provisions for the food ahead of time. Please take us up on the offer, we would enjoy it immensely - as we don't get much chance to do anything for the church anymore. On the selfish side of the scale - WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU. Wish there was a study group, at least, out here.

I hear that R.I. is scandalizing (or rather the Boston and Springfield papers) a young man's choice of date for the Junior Prom. How are your papers treating the incident?

Did you hear that Hartford got its gay rights bill? Its a start!

I hadn't had a chance before but congratulations on your fast, and on getting "Bike Club" involved in your Christmas project. Is their involvement an on going experience - I hope so!

Eager to hear you say when you and the troop are coming!

Yours in Christ,
whoever you conceive him to be,
Michael

Image: Michael neglected to tell you about the size of the house in reference to the amount of rooms available. We have 5 rooms on the main floor, which is on the 1st floor, and 2 Rooms on the 3rd floor. So, I guess you could say we have 7 Rooms available besides the basement, in which I'm in the process of piping up into my den and work room. Of course, having been here only 2 wks. now, it'll take time to really get settled and fix everything up the way we want. Not much else to say on my part, except will be looking forward to hearing from you.

Frank

18 CAPITOL ST.
AUBURN, NEW YORK
13021
3/24, 5, 6

Dear Marge,

It was a great comfort to receive your letter, especially as I was in the middle of writing one to you at the time, sensing that you were one of the few people I could talk to. A lot has happened since I started, but the basic problems still exist. I don't know whether to revise the original letter or to keep going with this one. Well, here it goes, basically as I originally wrote it, with the scratched out and tear-stained parts omitted - it's even in the original color!

Dear Marge,

2-7-79

I don't know whether I'm appealing to you as a "mommy" or as a "pastor", but I/we need help, and you are the only one I can think of with both the expertise and the empathy to help us solve it, if, indeed, it's not too late for a solution. As I see it, MCC/Syracuse is moribund. As much as I care about Bob Freeman-Jones, it distresses me to have to say that he has to be listed as one of the major causes of the pathology. (Note - even Bob sees the church dying, as of this week)

First, the easy part: What is the relationship of a congregation to a pastor in MCC - do we work for him, or does he work for us? Are we a congregational church or a clergy led church? How much power do we have as a congregation to overrule a pastor?

Now the hard part - how can the congregation overrule the pastor when we see the direction in which he is heading as destructive and, at the same time, not destroy him? This is Bob's church; he built it and has, in his own way, worked very hard to make it into a dynamic congregation.

A year ago you sat with us in a similar exercise to the one we did in New York, with nothing but praise for MCC/Syracuse. I praise the Lord that you were not assigned as observer to the Syracuse group at the conference to witness what happened to us this year. Of the original group that danced the gifts to the altar at the first anniversary, only Bob, Arlene and myself are left. The others have all left the church - out of anger, hurt, frustration. Seven more are ready to leave now - all leadership material (Mike, Ross, Phil have left; Henry is with us in body only, but not in spirit, and I'm still wavering). Lovers are afraid to come to church because of the constant threats against their relationships. One member has expressed the desire to resign from the board and leave the church because "the church is interfering with my spirituality." People are embarrassed to bring friends, so our numbers decrease instead of increasing.

2
and our commitments - spiritual, emotional and financial - dwindle.

The problems, as I see them, are that, in attempting to avoid upsetting anyone, Bob, and the church as a whole have become so wishy-washy that everyone is upset. If one person doesn't like responses, we don't have responses even though the other 12 do. If one person is uncomfortable with a strong christo-centric religion, we try not to mention Christ "too often". If one person feels we should have a visible political presence, those who, for ~~political~~ valid reasons must remain closeted are made to feel selfish and irresponsible. We are fast becoming neither Christian nor gay because one of our members (need I tell you who she is?) is neither Christian nor gay and feels like an outsider.

Marge, I come home from church every Sunday emotionally exhausted, and am more and more tempted to not even go. Arlene is bleeding every one dry who fits her game plan, and running down those who she doesn't see a value (do you know, for instance, that I am incompetent to tally up the questionnaires we passed out in N.Y. on workshops?) Bob Schofield is busy bad-mouthing all those who have been too sick to show up to help him on one occasion or another, or spending money we don't have for altar clothes we don't need. I find it takes more and more energy to make the trip into Syracuse. If I'm doing the service, or if I'm there with the kids anyway, I go, but I'm less and less inclined to go in specially. What keeps me going is that I do get to do an occasional service, and I'm co-chair of the district conference in May. This week I started working at a church north of Syracuse (more about that ~~later~~ later) and that meets a lot of the needs that we offer. The only reason for going to MCC/Syracuse now is the district, which I love, and the fact that it's a place to be open. I told Michael if he and Ross quit I'd quit, too. Well, they have, and I don't know what to do. I'm definitely going to pull out for a "vacation" after district conference till September. I think after Bob goes, a lot of the good people will be back and we can start again with good strong roots - how would you like a new church? We could use someone like you to get us started again.

I appreciate your invitation to come down for the exhorters retreat. I wish I could have made it, but it's a real project to get time off around this place. Someday, though, I'll take you up on your offer. In the meantime, if you need to get away I have a nice new apartment with plenty of room and an extra bed. Come anytime you like, but also why not come up a few days before district conference, take your shoes off and unwind.

You asked about my non-church life - it's all quite routine. You're almost right about the job - I'm a nurse aide rather than a nurse. I work in a geriatric "rehabilitation" center (the quotes are because most of the people are too far gone to benefit from rehabilitation and go through the therapies to pass the long dull days. I'm learning far more about death and dying than about

3

rehabilitation. Days, I work in Michael's office - he's an audiologist - and really love it. I'm learning more and more about it, and I especially enjoy the people who come in. It's still geriatric, but at least they're on their feet and can communicate in a somewhat logical way. Just for variety, we get a few young people - our youngest is 6 months, and we have an adorable 3-year old with an aid in each ear. Most of the time, though we watch TV, read dirty books and talk and talk - most of my best theological discussions have taken place in Michael's office. Unfortunately I never remember to turn on the tape recorder - There's been a lot of good sermon material raised, discussed and then, unfortunately, forgotten in that office. It's also a place where I can be open, although being open with one's best friend and closeted every where else hardly constitutes a great liberating experience - especially after being totally open for the last 3 years before I started to work at Mercy.

My newest job is as Director of Religious Education at The Universalist Church in Central Square (about 20 miles north of Syracuse). Right now I'm just there very part time for \$10.00 a week and transportation. As soon as I bring the attendance up enough to have an effect on the budget, I'll be regular part time with a salary. My first week has been very exciting. I had been told there were currently only 4 children left from a potential of 60 (in a town of 1500 people!). On my first Sunday there were 13, and we had 4 new ones this week. Saturday I ran a workshop for parents to help plan and explore future directions. The Church school has basically been run by a 12 year old boy (Tyler) and I'm just finding out how much responsibility he had - he keeps all the records of budget, attendance, contributions, etc., supervises the smaller kids, and does all the "altar guild" type of things. He obviously enjoys these things, but I hope I can get him involved in 12-year-old things as well. He's the oldest - the youngest is 2. The minister is a woman who has been hired for the year as U-U intern Chaplain on the S.U. campus and is working in Central Square to provide experience as well as extra income. It's a fascinating church - old line New England in theology but so anxious for chances to do and learn new things. They want a very traditional "hymn sandwich" type of service, with the same responses, affirmations, etc. each week, but during the sermon time, anything goes. There's a real potential for growth and it's very exciting being the midwife for the rebirth.

Beyond the above mentioned, my life consists mostly of sleep with occasional small digressions into sociability, and periodic bouts of loneliness which fortunately never last more than a week. If you happen to be in Auburn

The Wednesday after Easter, you are invited to a passover seder at my house and are welcome to stay

I just read the letter Paul wrote Bob FJ - tell him I will write, but also remind him that he can write to me, too - give him my address.

Time to make rounds now - 18 beds, all of which are soaked, containing 18 patients all very overweight, with a guarantee that at least 5 will either hit, kick or bite me, and these will be the 5 who are covered (including inside their mouths) with B.M. - but I still love them - especially the fighters and enjoy the work.

Thank you for writing when I needed it. I've read your letter several times and have found much comfort just knowing you're there and that you care. Keep writing.

Best of wishes and lots of warm fuzzies,
Mary-Lib

The long dull days. & in evening:

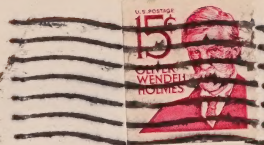
EFFECTIVE: May, 1978

We have installed an additional telephone for use with the TTY (teletype) to call our deaf friends. This is just a reminder of that change.

Voice telephone - (215) 924-0683

TTY (teletype) - (215) 924-0684

Richard S. Roberts, Jr.
Post Office Box 13225
Philadelphia, PA 19101



REV. MARGE RAGONA
5 JUNCTION STREET
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

02907

~~DOTTE~~ EDER
~~ETHEL~~ LEFFINGWELL
~~31~~ BROADSHIP RD.
~~—~~ DUNDALK, MD.
21222

H7

March 31, 1979

Dear Marge,

Howdy! I hope this find you and MCC - Providence doing well.

All is well here, and Dottie and I are very busy.

Dottie was approved for her Deaconate last week and will become a Deacon on Easter Sunday at the late service.

April and May are going to be busy months for MCC - Baltimore. Along with our monthly pot luck we are having a Bingo in April, a Benefit at a local bar and a joint dance with Dignity in May! The dance is still in the beginning stages but we hope it will help the church and Dignity work together for the future. We had a bowling party last weekend which was a big success as a social event and will be added to our list of social events. We hope that in the near future we will be able to compile a booklet of fund raisers and social events. The purpose of the booklet will be for better organization of events in the future and will be kept so if other MCC's want new ideas.

I hope to correspond with other MCC's in the future so that we can exchange ideas.

Last month the Planning Com-

mittie put together a Salad Bar for the Pot Luck. It was a well liked idea and may become a regular part of future pot lucks.

Dattie and I have decided to sell our molds and slow the business back to a hophy. It has consumed to much of our time and we want to get more involved in the church and things we enjoy but haven't done for awhile.

Rev. Delores Berry is home for a few days. Unfortunately her visit was prompted by the death of her cousin who was found shot ~~to~~ near the Beltway and Woodlawn area of Baltimore County. Delores looks good but is sad and angry over Myron's (her cousin's) death.

We (the congregation) are having a surprise birthday party for Stan next Friday evening. It's going to be at our house. You're invited, if you happen to be in the area. (H.A.A!)

We still have your flannel shirt still and also we don't know for sure if we have all the ornaments, that you picked out, set aside. If you can remember any of them it would be helpful.

Yours in Christ,
Dattie & Ethel

FROM THE DESK OF:

Richard S. Roberts, Jr.

REPLY TO:

POST OFFICE BOX 13225

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19101

April 10, 1979

Dear Marge,

Although I did not get to attend the last NE district conference, you know that is where my heart is. I had wanted to attend, but I had a conflict in my schedule.

Last Sunday we got the applications for general conference, and for the first time, I see that the fellowship does not want the job of assigning the roommates. I have always been looking forward to having the chance to socialize with people from different parts of the fellowship rather than those from my own church or district.

I don't know what your group will be doing, or who will be going, but I hope that we can somehow work out a roommate setup. I would prefer to stay in a quad, and with other than Mid-Atlantic people. If you can, put me in contact with some people from your church or your district, that would be interested in the same thing.

I plan on contacting some of my friends from around the fellowship that I have not seen since Denver in hopes of rooming with them. I am interested in the deaf ministry, and would enjoy having deaf roommates also, or those people who are interested in, and working with the deaf.

Thanks for any information that you may have for me, and give my love to all my friends in Providence.

Your brother in Christ,

Love, Rich

